

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A self-aligning coupling for mating a pair of axial arranged first and second flanged fittings, the coupling comprising:
 - (a) first and second arms adapted for pivotal connection to one another, and having open and closed relative pivotal positions in use; and
 - (b) a rotational assist mechanism adapted to mechanically ~~synchronize~~ effectuate the closing of the first and second arms relative to a pair of flanged fittings to be connected in use, and further adapted to provide motion between the first arm and the second arm to receive and secure the second flanged fitting angularly misaligned relative to the first flanged fitting.
2. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, further comprising a seal for providing sealed fluid communication between the first flanged fitting and the second flanged fitting.
3. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, further comprising an interior surface having a conical self-alignment portion adapted to orient the second flanged fitting relative to the first flanged fitting.
4. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 3, wherein the self alignment portion is adapted to orient the two flanged fittings from a maximum of about 10° of angular misalignment therebetween.
5. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, further comprising a fastener for further securing the arms in a the closed position.
6. (currently amended) A ~~The~~ self-aligning coupling of ~~claim 5~~ for mating a pair of axial arranged first and second flanged fittings, the coupling comprises:
 - (a) first and second arms adapted for pivotal connection to one another, and

having open and closed relative pivotal positions in use, wherein the first and second arms further comprise outwardly extending ears having apertures ^(for receiving the fastener)

(b) a rotational assist mechanism adapted to mechanically effectuate the closing of the first and second arms relative to a pair of flanged fittings to be connected in use, and further adapted to provide motion between the first arm and the second arm to receive and secure the second flanged fitting; and
^{received in the apertures}
(c) a fastener for further securing the arms in the closed position.

7. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 5 6, wherein the fastener comprises a C-clamp.
8. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, further comprising a garter spring arranged to normally bias the arms toward the closed position.
9. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 8, wherein the first and second arms further comprise a garter groove to at least partially receive the garter spring in use.
10. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, ~~further~~ wherein each ~~half~~ arm comprises a single mating groove adapted to receive the flanges of the ~~two~~ aligned pair of flanged fittings in use.
11. (canceled)
12. (canceled)
13. (currently amended) A self-aligning coupling for mating a pair of axial arranged first and second pipes, the mating ends of the first and second pipes having first and second flanged fittings, respectively, the self-aligning coupling ~~comprising~~ comprises:
 - (a) a first arm having a base end and a receiving end, the first arm base end pivotally connected adjacent to the first flanged fitting in use; and

(b) a second arm having a base end and a receiving end, the second arm base end pivotally connected adjacent to the first flanged fitting in use, wherein the second arm base end engages the first arm base end whereby the receiving ends of the arms can be synchronously moved between an open position and a closed position to receive and secure the flanged fitting of the second pipe.

14. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 13, wherein at least one of ~~said~~ the arms further comprises a self-alignment surface wherein the self-alignment surface angularly aligns the second flanged fitting with the first flanged fitting in the closed position.

15. (canceled)

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (canceled)

19. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 13, further comprising a mating groove at least partially defined by a portion of each arm.

20. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 19, further comprising a seal disposed within the mating groove in use.

21. (canceled)

22. (canceled)

23. (canceled)

24. (currently amended) A self-aligning coupling for mating a pair of corresponding flanged fittings, comprising:

(a) a pair of arms adapted for pivotal connection between open and closed positions, the arms at least partially defining a mating groove adapted to receive at least ~~portions~~ portions of a pair of flanged fittings to be coupled; and

- (b) a rotational assist mechanism linking the arms and adapted to move the arms such that the flanged fittings being angularly misaligned can be received in the mating groove as the arms are effectively pivoted to a the closed position.
25. (original) The self-aligning coupling of claim 24, wherein the rotational assist mechanism comprises first and second interacting members adapted to mechanically synchronize rotational orientation of the two arms as they are pivoted in use.
26. (canceled)
27. (canceled)
28. (canceled)
29. (canceled)
30. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The self-aligning coupling of claim 24, further comprising for mating a pair of corresponding flanged fittings, comprising:
- (a) a pair of arms adapted for pivotal connection between open and closed positions, the arms at least partially defining a mating groove adapted to receive at least portions of a pair of flanged fittings to be coupled;
- (b) a rotational assist mechanism linking the arms and adapted to move the arms such that the flanged fittings can be received in the mating groove as the arms are effectively pivoted to the closed position; and
- (c) a clamp selectively affixing ~~said the first and second arm~~ arms in the closed position.
31. (currently amended) The self-aligning coupling of claim 24, wherein the ~~first and second~~ arms are hingedly oriented in a clamshell arrangement relative to one another in use.
32. (canceled)
33. (new) The self-aligning coupling of claim 1, wherein the rotational assist mechanism

A,
(cont)

effectuates the closing of the first and second arms relative to the pair of flanged fittings by moving the first and second arms in synchronization.

As
(cont.)
